

policies and mechanisms that have been adopted for the advancement of Omani women

Eradication of poverty among women through productive programmes

INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL MEASURES

Financial:

The methods that are presently used in distributing the General budget over the different sectors do not allow monitoring the general or specific expenditures for programmes for the advancement of women nor can they provide a percentage of expenditure, therefore, it is not possible to find a trend in expenditure proportion since 1995. However, it can be said that there is an increase in expenditure for programmes and projects for women through other indicators which demonstrate clear achievement in areas such as education, combating of illiteracy, public health, reproductive health and cultural awareness. Presently the Ministry of National Resources is working at disseminating data by Gender and providing this information for allocation of general resources that are specific for the advancement

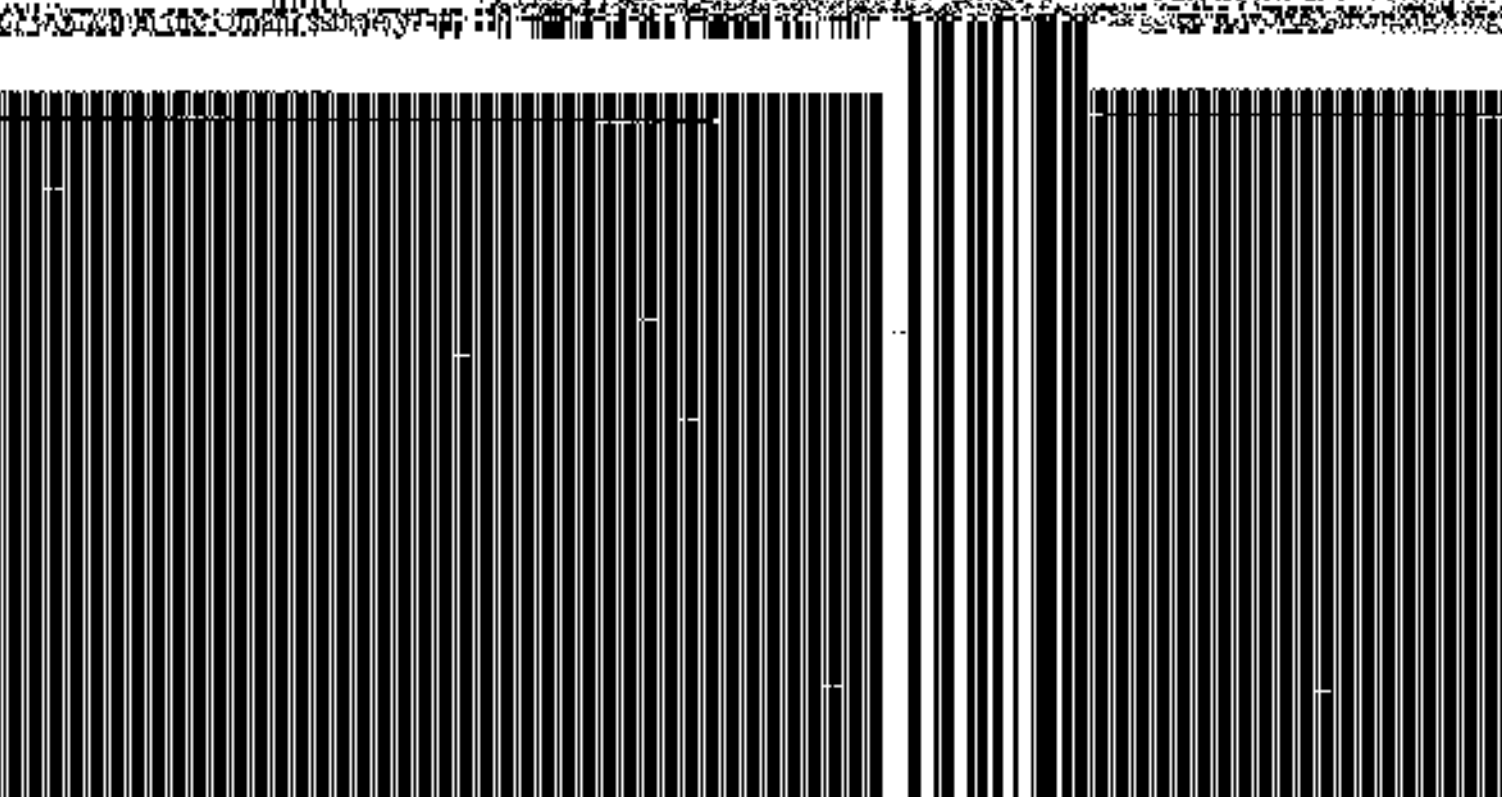
of personnel in both the public and private sector in concepts and issues:

data processing according

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| <u>Institutional Measures:</u> |
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Administrative decisions and administrative directives that governs administrative structure in any governmental institution. That also applies to the external relations of such institutions and organizations. The institutional mechanisms is one of the twelve areas of the PEA which had been given priority according to para 196. Based on that law part gives importance to highlight goals and broad institutional structures that the Government or organizations, in addition to the and institutional structures which that state has established before and after 1995

Is defined as the practical activities with



WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

National objectives:

Increase the participation of national work force in general and women in particular.
 Increase the productivity of national work force, especially women, through equal opportunity
 equal wages and work benefits.
 Provide assistance to women to undertake productive projects.
 Meet the needs of the labor market.

In agriculture, the participation of women increased from 6.1 in 1993 to 11.4 in 1996.

industry, from 20.9 to 26.4 and services sector, from 9 to 9.7 for the same years.

Obstacles

1. The role that the family and some teachers and educational institutions play in forming a negative self perception. Therefore what is needed is to develop positive perception about women and their abilities to contribute to national development.

2. The preference given to men over women in some employment even if she is fully qualified. Also preference is given to the expatriates to Omani women due to differences in wages or benefits.

3. Most of the private sector institutions are concentrated in the Muscat province which does not allow many women to work. Also, these institutions do not provide social services for women.

4. In the industrial sectors there are no health services for both men and women. The insufficiency of occupational counselling whether in the General Education or at the University which hinders the Omani women the occupation which is appropriate for their qualifications. Many female secondary school graduates register in Colleges of Education or Medicine because such areas are...

...is against the concept of complementarity between them and the best investment is human resources.

7. The national inclination of women to work is limited number of occupations such as

8. The responsibility of the women within

9. Many women prefer not to work after

Future Actions:

The Sultan is presently in the process of developing technology, new knowledge, new skills especially to develop the technical skills of the local population in the production sectors. Within its context there is a need to have new opportunities through:

1. Adopting an educational academic program that provides General Science Education as well as applied skills.

require links between the educational institutions and the economic sectors.

3. Adopting special programmes open to young girls after the compulsory education phase

WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

Future Actions:

A. To eliminate the social obstacles and values that hinder women's employment and to identify

B. Adopt plans for employments of graduates in various sectors

C. Activate networks of communication and coordination between educational institutions and employment institutions

D. Establish specialized employment units centrally and in the provinces for women to appropriate employment opportunities

E. To activate NGOs so that they can promote awareness on employment for women and provide information to women on banks and similar institutions as well as support them with equipment, etc.

F. Facilitate access of women to soft loans and credits through appropriate channels and establish specialized department for small business credit

G. Mobilize local resources as well as foreign capital to finance projects

H. Activate NGOs for women's economic development

I. Develop Centre for Technical and Vocational Training so that the young girls

servants. Most of the workers are between 20-35 years old.

Women in the Private Sector

Women are working in private sector occupations that require applied technical skills as well as services. The Omani women are also involved in business.

Women Volunteers in the Social Sector

Women NGOs are monitored by the Department for Cultural Women NGOs in Social Affairs. There is always encouragement to establish women NGOs because it is a mechanism that allows women to participate in decision making and to be involved in community work.

In 1998, there were 23 such women organizations and those located in the provinces are considered main social institutions through which governmental services are provided. Also through these organizations, women provide an indirect input into decision making processes. These organizations have focused on poverty reduction.

Future Actions

greater participative action should be taken.

Ensure that there are opportunities for more women to participate in the decision-making

the level of community.

the framing of women in technical and managerial training so that they can make their decision in a more informed manner.

Ensure proper opportunities for women in the planning aspects of community projects and links to central structures.

participation.

4. Establishing voluntary groups to assist health

A Birth spacing programme was established which provides counselling and choice contraceptive methods with emphasis on the role of the man in birth spacing decisions.

5. A Programme to support mother and child care was established in 1987 and has been

ive health care for women.

health services by the Ministries of Defence, Coast Guard, Police and the Company for Oman Oil.

The private sector has undertaken a small role in providing health services under the supervision of the Ministry of Health.

All hospitals provide primary and preventive health care.

10. Health centers now provide 96% of the health needs of the country.

Indicators in the health sector:

- There are more female graduates than male of the 14 centers of the Ministry of Health (187 women versus 345)
- In 1997, 437 graduated from the nursing institute and women double the men, 320 women. Out of these, 20 of them to specialized 8 men and 12 women
- There are 2500 female volunteers in the health sector
- There is an expansion in the birth spacing programmes in 1997, 80% of those

WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

There was a national seminar held in Muscat in 1994 to examine the role of women in protecting the environment and it made many recommendations for inclusion in development plan including:

- increasing the opportunities in education and training in areas related to environmental protection
- increasing women's participation in decision-making related to environment\
- establishing a Committee for Women representing different sectors under the supervision of the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment, in order to deal with all issues related to women and the environment.

Progress:

There are now 54 volunteer groups for environmental awareness in which the Omani women participate extensively.

In order to encourage women to implement environmentally-friendly projects, a number of women were given permission to establish ins... Institutions of Environmental importance during the period 1995-1997 such as freezing and packaging fish, carpentry, production of plant outs and production of plastics.

Twenty-one women were trained on environmental skills.

Provide information on environment, the proper use of communities and products.

Twenty-one women were associated in managerial and technical sector of the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment during the period 1995-1998.

Obstacles

A major obstacle is the absence of database and information on Women and could provide information on representation of women in social services as participation in the use of natural resources. Due to the absence of the data it is difficult to calculate indicators to measure the contribution of women related to quality of life.

WOMEN AND MEDIA:

Progress:

Some of the progress was reflected in documentary programmes about women showing their development and advancement and emphasis on the importance of political participation.

These included:

Radio programmes, weekly T.V. programmes for women available since 1995, pages in newspapers that highlight activities undertaken by Omani women, in addition to developmental drama in both T.V. and Radio to show the changing role of women.

Employment and the Media:

Men and women have ensured rights to the same wages, benefits, and responsible rights since 1995.

Also, higher level appointments have been made such as General Director of Education and Chief of Personnel.

In the media, the emphasis is given to highlighting on the role of women.

All the election processes now encourage women to participate in the local N. Shura Council. Oman is the only GCC country that has a woman in the Shura Council. Media and rural women and Bodwan: Media services focus on women in rural areas in the remote areas.

The media also tries to raise the awareness of these women and the community in four things:

- a) the proper raising and socialization of children
- b) to highlight the importance of the Shura Council
- c) To give attention to the participation of women in employment.

Human Rights

Personal Status Law Sultan's Decree No. 32/97. It has six Chapters, 282 Articles that regulates family relations, marriage, divorce, custody and other related matters. It was based on Islamic Sharia. Out of the 282 articles, 127 regulate matters related to engagement, marriage, divorce and custody. These articles gave women privileges in addition to what the Sharia has stipulated.

1. The law gave the women the right to break an engagement to request a divorce.

gives the women the right to manage her dowry as she pleases.

Law stipulates that the wife has the right to family name, to have total control over private wealth, and that the husband cannot cause harm both morally and physically.

cannot force her to live with another wife without her consent and she has the right to demand a separate home if she experiences any harm.

to vote in 1994, and in 1997 all Omani women

in the legal area will increase because in 1997 the law was amended and women have the right to enrol in the

to demand a separate home

5. Omani women in Muscat got the right to vote.

6. It is expected that the number of women in the College of Law and Shariah University.